

GUIDE TO DESIGNING & PRINTING A POSTER FOR A RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

What a poster should include

- Title: project title
- Authors: your name, faculty advisor's name, names of collaborators, and department
- Sections: These can include Purpose (or Objectives or Introduction); Methods and Materials; Results or Findings; Discussion; Acknowledgments; References. Or they might be anything that makes sense for your topic.
- A pleasing visual design. Images or graphic elements are vital.

Making a Full-Size Poster with PowerPoint

- Start PowerPoint and open "new presentation"
- From the menu bar, select File > Page setup.
- In the box that appears, the first section is "size."
- Next to the heading "slides sized for," select "custom" from the pull-down menu
- If you're using a PC, enter your desired size. For example, 36"x42."
- If using a Mac, enter dimensions at 50% of the final size. For example, if the final poster is going to be 36"x42," set the slide size at 18"x21." Click "OK."
- You will see this prompt: "the current page size exceeds the printable area of the paper in the printer." It will offer three options: cancel, OK, and fix. Click "OK."
- Set the slide layout to "blank." This is done differently in different versions of PowerPoint. If you are having difficulty, type "layout" in the PowerPoint help menu, and you will find instructions on how to create or change slide layouts.
- You can look at the poster at different sizes. Using a smaller size (e.g. 25%) will allow you to see the whole poster at once. Using a larger size (e.g. 75%) will allow you to read your text more easily.
- If you find it difficult to keep track of what you are doing, create a second PowerPoint file, with a regular sized PowerPoint slide presentation. You can make a series of slides and then copy the text boxes and pictures from those slides into the custom poster file.

Tips for Designing a Poster: Keep it Simple!

- arrange your material in a logical progression
- arrange materials in columns
- don't try to cram too much on to the poster
- start with a simple template, if you don't want to make too many choices

Selecting Colors and Fonts

- Too many colors can be distracting

- Select font colors and background colors to maximize contrast. A dark font on a light background is more easily read than vice versa
- Choose a font size and style that can be read easily from several feet away. 72 or larger for titles. 54 or larger for subheadings. At least 18-24 for body text.
- To emphasize a point, use bold or italics rather than underlining as underlined words can be more difficult to read

Text for the Poster

- Use text boxes for different sections.
- Avoid large blocks of text and limit or eliminate jargon and technical terms
- Organize and reduce text by using subheadings, key words, bullet points
- A figure or graph often convey information more efficiently than paragraphs of text

Graphs or tables

- Graphs can be added with copy and paste commands or by importing (same as pictures)
- Keep graphs simple. Avoid “chart junk”: 3-d, shadowing, multiple grid lines, labeling every tick mark

Pictures and Photos

- Pictures and photos can be added with copy and paste commands or by importing.
- To import: select Insert on the menu bar, then choose “Picture” or “Photo (depending on your version of PowerPoint). Select the option that includes the phrase “from file” and then select the file from wherever it is stored on your computer.
- Images should be at least 150dpi and the same size they will be on the poster. A resolution below 150dpi will result in a pixelated image.*
- Save the image as a “JPG” as this format is easier to insert into PowerPoint.
- Pictures and photos can be edited using the picture tools. Access to the picture tools varies by PowerPoint version. Use the help menu if you are having difficulty finding the tools.
- Resizing: click on the corner of the picture/photo and slide the mouse to resize
- Cropping: choose the crop tool and crop from any side
- Framing: click on the picture to select it, then choose “colors and lines” or “border” (depending on which version of PowerPoint you are using).

Save the File as a JPEG for printing on a plotter, which is a massive printer.

How to make a .jpg of your PowerPoint poster on a Macintosh computer

1. With your PowerPoint slide open, go to file "Save As."
2. Under "Format" choose "JPEG."
3. Press "Save."

Open the .jpeg file and ensure that it is the appropriate size. If you encounter problems, please contact the Digital Media Center.